

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Proj PBSUCCESS

3 April 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Procurement of Rations for Project PBSUCCESS.

1. On 30 March 1954 Mr. Wisner telephoned to say that he had just received a very alarming report concerning certain procurement which, if true, indicated gross negligence as a minimum and ultimately might be much more serious. I agreed to see [] without delay in order to get further details.

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2. [] reported to me and Mr. Kirkpatrick that the Logistics Office had procured a quantity of rations for Project PBSUCCESS and delivered them to [] where they were found to be contaminated and 70 per cent lethal, making them unfit for human consumption and, hence, unavailable for a phase of the PBSUCCESS operation.

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3. Mr. Kirkpatrick agreed to get in touch with Mr. J. C. King, Chief, WH Division, right away and I agreed to get in touch with the Logistics Office to explore the matter and decide what remedial action should be taken.

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4. [] from the Logistics Office came immediately to my office and reported that they had received a requisition from the WH Division on 12 February for [] pimican rations to be delivered by 20 February. They stated that they had pointed out to representatives of the WH Division [] that the pimican ration was an Arctic ration developed for Admiral Byrd and others by an ex-Chief Petty Officer of the Navy [] and would not be suitable for the tropics inasmuch as it could be maintained only in a temperature of 70 degrees and lower. This was confirmed with [] Chief of the [] Division, Technical Services Staff, who was also asked to recommend an appropriate substitute. (Specifications required a ration which a

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5. [] with Logistics Office representatives, visited ex-Chief Petty Officer [] who exhibited packets of rations which he said had been on the shelf of his home for from nine to eighteen months.

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and [] examined the rations, sampled them, and later obtained the approval of the WH Division for their purchase. [] had to have the rations produced by meat packers [] who work under Government supervision. The first batch of [] rations was delivered on 5 March. The final batch of [] rations was delivered on or about 26 March.

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6. On 25 March 1954 a cable from [] stated that the rations were moldy and unfit for human consumption. A cable went back to the field asking for further information on this matter. At the same time, the Chief, Medical Staff was requested to analyze samples sent here for that purpose.

7. On 26 March 1954 the field cabled, in substance, that the rations were moldy but otherwise all right. In the meantime, however, the Chief, Medical Staff recommended that these rations not be used since at least a part of them were, according to his own analysis, unfit for human consumption.

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8. Later [] and I reviewed the foregoing with Mr. Kirkpatrick and [] of the WH Division. We also reported that Dr. Tietjen would make a further analysis of his samples, the Logistics Office would explore all possibilities to replace these rations completely, and that we would send a Medical Technician to [] as quickly as possible to make further tests on the spot. [] on behalf of the WH Division, indicated that if the rations could be replaced within thirty days the deadline for the Project could still be met.

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9. I requested [] to brief Mr. Wisner on these developments and of the action being taken; he assured me that he would do so.

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L. K. WHITE
Acting Deputy Director
(Administration)

cc: Inspector General
Chief, WH Division []
Chief, Logistics Office

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